



NEWS RELEASE

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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CROP YIELDS BETTER THAN EXPECTED FOR VIRGINIA FARMERS

Virginia's corn and soybean yields exceeded expectations for the 2001 crop season despite the dry weather during the summer. The precipitation that was received typically fell at timely intervals. The harvest season was near ideal with long periods of dry, sunny weather conditions.

Corn for grain yields are estimated at 123 bushels per acre, 23 bushels below the previous year's record 146 bushels per acre but well above the 78 bushel yield in 1999. Production is estimated at 40.6 million bushels from 330,000 acres, 16 percent below the 2000 production. Acres harvested for silage totaled 135,000 acres with a yield of 15.5 tons per acre.

Soybeans yields averaged a very good 36 bushels per acre, 2.5 bushels below the record high yield recorded in 2000. A total of 480,000 acres were harvested for beans and compares with 480,000 acres harvested last year and 440,000 acres two years ago. Soybean production is estimated at 17.3 million bushels, 6 percent below last year's production.

Virginia's peanut producers harvested an average of 3,100 pounds per acre this season, 295 pounds per acre above last year. Peanut production is estimated at 232.5 million pounds, up 11 percent from the 2000 production.

Cotton production is estimated at 199,000 bales, up 20 percent from last year. The cotton forecast for 2000 averaged 918 pounds per acre, up 180 pounds per acre from 2000's 738 pound average. Producers harvested 104,000 acres in 2001 which is down 4,000 acres from last year.

Flue-cured tobacco yields averaged 2,350 pounds per acre, 90 pounds below the record of 2,440 pounds per acre harvested in 2000. Virginia's production is expected to total 48.2 million pounds, up 13 percent from last year reflecting an increase in acreage. Burley tobacco yield is estimated at 2,000 pounds per acre, up 400 pounds from last year. Burley production is estimated at 15.4 million pounds, up 38 percent from the 2000 crop.

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CORN AND SOYBEAN PRODUCTION DOWN

Corn grain production is estimated at 9.51 billion bushels, down 4 percent from the revised 9.92 billion bushels in 2000. This is the fourth largest crop behind 1994's record production of 10.1 billion bushels followed by 2000's and 1998's production. The U.S. grain yield of 138.2 bushels per acre, the second highest yield on record, is up 0.2 bushel from November and 1.3 bushels from 2000.

The 2000 corn grain production was revised to 9.92 billion bushels, down 0.5 percent from the previous estimate. Acreage planted for all purposes was raised by 6,000 acres, virtually unchanged at 79.6 million acres. Acres harvested for grain was decreased by 292,000 acres, 0.4 percent. The 2000 grain yield, at 136.9 bushels per acre, was lowered 0.2 bushel from the previous estimate.

Sorghum for grain production in 2001 is estimated at 515 million bushels, down 4 percent from the November forecast, and up 9 percent from 2000. Area harvested for grain was estimated at 8.58 million acres, up 11 percent from 2000. Average grain yield, at 59.9 bushels per acre, was 1.0 bushel below the 2000 average yield.

Rice production in 2001 totaled 213 million cwt, up 2 percent from the November 1 forecast and up 12 percent from 2000. The average yield per acre for all U.S. rice is estimated at 6,429 pounds per acre, 55 pounds above the November 1 forecast. This all rice yield is the highest on record. The previous record of 6,281 pounds per acre was set last year.

Soybean production in 2001 totaled 2.89 billion bushels, down 1 percent from the November 1 forecast, but 5 percent above 2000. The 2001 production is the highest on record, followed by the 2000 crop of 2.76 billion bushels. The average yield per acre in 2001 is estimated at 39.6 bushels, 0.2 bushel above the November 1 forecast and is 1.5 bushels above the 2000 yield.

All cotton production is estimated at 20.1 million bales, up 20,000 bales from last month and up 17 percent from 2000. Yield is expected to average 698 pounds per harvested acre, up 7 pounds from last month. A 50,000 bale increase in American-Pima cotton more than offset a 30,000 bale decrease in upland cotton. The increase to American-Pima production was the result of an increase in California acreage. Changes to acreage and production estimates were based on survey and administrative data.

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